

guess actually, to be technically correct, it's \$103.4 billion. While \$0.1 billion may not matter here, it sure matters in America. \$103.4 billion in new spending.

We have already enacted over a \$6 billion increase in the continuing resolution for this year. We added \$17 billion in unrequested funding to spend in the supplemental for this year. And now we're beginning this process of moving toward the additional \$80.3 billion added to spending on this year's budget.

\$100 billion is a huge amount of money. Today we're considering the Interior and Environment appropriations bill that really makes a good portion of that increase happen right here. This bill increases spending by almost 5 percent over last year's level, \$1.2 billion of new spending.

And here, if you look at this spending thermometer, we're halfway up to what may be the taxpayer's boiling point. Somebody has to pay the bill. Somebody has to produce the revenue. Some American family is going to have to have a little less take-home pay because government wanted just a little bit more here, a little bit more there, a little bit more everywhere else.

And all my good friend from Colorado's amendment does is say, let's reduce spending here by one-half of 1 percent. Let's reduce spending by \$138 million and still see if we can't do the things that need to be done in this appropriations bill in the right way. If you add this increase to the increases already proposed and passed over the past 2 weeks, we're spending \$23.8 billion more than last year.

I rise in strong support of this amendment. I respect both the chairman and the ranking member of the committee and believe that they've done a good job with this bill, but I believe you could do that same job. I think you could do the same job, produce the same results with asking the American taxpayers not to have to carry a burden of 4½ percent new spending in this part of the budget. And so I strongly recommend that we take this, what may seem like a slight reduction here, but when families have to start paying that \$138 million in additional taxes, it's a big deal for American families. It should be a big deal for us.

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. OBEY. I would like to make a few comments on the remarks of my friend from Missouri. We've just heard an expression of deep concern about the so-called runaway spending in this bill and other appropriation bills. And we've heard deep concern expressed about how this is going to hurt the average taxpayer.

Well, I would like to compare priorities. They've talked about our budget.

I would like to talk about theirs, although I must admit that in 3 of the last 6 years, they couldn't even pass one. We passed a budget. In 3 out of the last 6 years, they couldn't even pass their own budget because of internal squabbles between themselves. But I want to talk about the budget that they attempted to pass. The budget that we're operating under was signed by the President, passed by a Republican Congress, and this year will give over \$50 billion in tax cuts to people who make over a million bucks a year. That seems to be the top priority of folks on the other side of the aisle, to preserve that high-roller tax cut above all else.

Well, let me tell you what we think should be higher priorities. They've attacked us because of what we did in the continuing resolution last year and they attack us for what we're trying to do in this bill today. I plead fully guilty of trying to add, in fact we did add almost \$4 billion of additional funding for veterans health care. I see no sense of shared sacrifice in this country when it comes to the war. Only military families are being asked to pay a price. We decided that we ought to at least see to it that veterans are taken care of when they come home. So we added \$4 billion.

Then you bet! We added some more so-called "runaway spending," so that middle-class kids could get more help to go to college by raising the Pell Grants. Now, I've never had anybody in my district say, "Why don't you guys get your act together and cut cancer research?" But that's exactly what the Republican-controlled Congress did in the last 2 years. They cut health grants, research grants at the NIH, over 500 grants. So we put \$610 million back into that continuing resolution to wipe out those cuts, because we think it's more important to save people's lives from cancer and Parkinson's and heart disease than it is to wear a green eye shade that says "Mr. Perfect" on it.

Then we added additional funding for community health care. 1.2 million additional Americans are going to be able to access community health centers and get health care without begging.

□ 1400

I do not apologize for that. Nobody does on this side of the aisle. When it comes to this bill, we make no apology of the fact that we are trying to restore funds which were cut out of this Interior budget for the last 3 years, cut out of the EPA budget, for the clean water revolving fund. There isn't a bigger need in rural America than clean water and decent sewer systems.

I represent all kinds of communities of less than 2,000 people. At least half of the families are headed either by women or people over 65. They do not have the tax-paying capacity on the property tax to meet the standards required of them to clean up their water and their sewer problems. Mr. DICKS

has tried to deal with that. We do not apologize for that one iota.

We've got some other priorities too. We're going to try to provide additional funding for energy. We have added, in the three bills that have passed this House so far, and including this bill, we will have added more than \$1 billion in an effort to increase and strengthen our energy research so that we aren't the prisoners of gas and oil companies and so that we aren't the prisoners of Middle East oil. We make no apologies for that.

Admittedly, there are some people in this House who know the cost of everything and the value of nothing. I'm looking at a few of them right now.

But the fact is that we recognize that it is important to make long-term investments so that 10 years from now, we can have the kind of country we want it to be, rather than having the kind of country we don't want it to be.

I would suggest I will compare our priorities to yours any time. You can defend those \$57 billion in tax cuts for millionaires until the cows come home. I would rather defend increased service at our national parks, increased educational opportunity, increased health care, increased clean water and clean air opportunities. I think the public will take those priorities any time.

Mrs. MUSGRAVE. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1½ minutes to my colleague from Georgia (Mr. PRICE).

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I think this has been a healthy debate.

I appreciate my good friend from Colorado for yielding. I want to commend as well my friend from Washington, the subcommittee chairman, for the work that he has done and the ranking member for work that they have done. The subcommittee chairman said that there was nothing personal in his opposition to this amendment, and that's true. There is absolutely nothing personal here in this Chamber.

But this discussion is personal to the American taxpayer, and it's all about priorities. We have offered today a series of amendments. One amendment said we ought to spend exactly what we spent last year, tens of billions of dollars in this area of the government. The majority party declined to accept that amendment.

Then we offered an amendment that said instead of increasing spending by 9.5 percent, we ought to increase spending by 8.5 percent, and they said, no, they weren't interested in that.

So the gentlelady from Colorado says, well, if you can't save \$1 out of every \$100, how about 50 cents? How about 50 cents out of every \$100?

What Congress is spending in this appropriations bill and in every appropriations bill, because of the increase in spending, is money that we don't have. It's money that the Congress doesn't have. This money represents the debt that Congress is burdening on future generations, our children, and our grandchildren. It is simply time, it's time for Washington to stop finding ways to spend more money.